



February 2006

Expanding Access to Baccalaureate Degree Programs: A Status Report on Implementation of House Bill 1794

Introduction

The 2005 Legislature took an important step in expanding access to baccalaureate degree programs through the passage of House Bill 1794. The legislation brought together several strategies to improve access, which consisted of authorizing an expanded role for the branch campuses to include the development of lower-division courses, greater flexibility in admission of transfer students, and freshman enrollment at all four branches¹. The measure also encourages continued collaboration with the community college system and others in the delivery of baccalaureate-level education, through the implementation of proportionality and co-enrollment agreements.

In addition, the new law authorizes two pilot projects at the community and technical colleges. The first would allow up to four institutions to offer baccalaureate degree programs in an applied field, and the second would allow the community and technical colleges to contract with the regional universities, the branch campuses, and/or The Evergreen State College to offer degree programs on the community college campuses. Finally, the legislation transferred the management responsibility of the NSIS consortium to Everett Community College and directed Everett Community College to develop a plan to move the consortium from its current location at Everett Station to the Everett Community College campus and develop the consortium using a “university center” model.

Under the legislation, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is required to report on the progress of implementing the new authorities granted in the measure by December 2008. This status update briefly outlines progress to date in the implementation of HB 1794. During the February 23 meeting, the board will be asked to approve a set of measures that would be used to assess progress in the December 2008 report.

¹Freshman enrollment at Washington State University Tri-Cities is limited to enrollment of students pursuing a bachelor’s degree in biotechnology.

Status of Implementation to Date

Branch Campus Expansion

Washington State University, Vancouver. The Legislature authorized expansion of WSUV consistent with a “metropolitan university,” as described in the campus self-study submitted to the HECB and the Legislature in December 2004. Pursuant to that plan and the funding provided in the current budget, WSUV plans to enroll 200 full-time equivalent (FTE) students in lower-division courses beginning fall 2006. Curriculum development is moving forward and the institution has begun receiving applications from prospective freshmen. While the bulk of the anticipated lower-division enrollments are expected to be first-time freshmen, the institution will likely accommodate a number of lower-division transfer students as well. WSUV is working with the HECB and the community and technical colleges to establish proportionality agreements.

Washington State University, Tri-Cities. The Legislature authorized expansion of lower-division coursework at the WSU Tri-Cities campus, along with freshman admissions, but limited freshman admissions to students enrolled in coursework leading to a bachelor’s degree in biotechnology. To date, the HECB has not received a proposal to establish a biotechnology degree at the Tri-Cities campus.

University of Washington, Tacoma. The Legislature authorized expansion consistent with a metropolitan university as described in the campus self-study submitted to the HECB and the Legislature in December 2004. Pursuant to that plan and the funding provided in the current budget, UWT plans to enroll 125 FTE students in lower-division courses beginning fall 2006. Curriculum development is moving forward and the institution has begun receiving applications for freshman enrollment. UWT is focusing efforts on freshman enrollment as they build out their curriculum in the first year. Once the curriculum is fully “on line,” the institution will provide greater opportunity for students to transfer at the sophomore level. UWT has established a proportionality agreement, signed by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the HECB, which establishes that the proportion of community college transfer students will not drop below 72 percent of the entering class, and upper-division enrollment will remain above the base year level of 1,300 FTE students.

University of Washington, Bothell. The Legislature authorized expansion consistent with the campus self-study submitted to the HECB and the Legislature in December 2004. Pursuant to that plan and the funding provided in the current budget, UWB plans to enroll 125 FTE students in lower-division courses beginning fall 2006. UWB has created a formal administrative structure for the lower-division coursework with rotating faculty assignments. Faculty are currently developing the curriculum, and new courses will be reviewed through the institutional process in the spring.

The institution has begun receiving applications for freshman enrollment. UWB is focusing efforts on freshman enrollment as they build out their curriculum in the first year. Once the curriculum is fully on line, UWB will provide greater opportunity for students to transfer at the sophomore level. In addition, the institution has established a number of co-enrollment agreements with local community colleges that will enable students to enroll concurrently at UWB and the community college. UWB has also established a proportionality agreement, signed by the SBCTC and the HECB, which establishes that the proportion of community college transfer students will not drop below 52 percent of the entering class, and upper-division enrollment will remain above the base year level of 1,150 FTE students.

Applied Baccalaureate Degrees

The Legislature authorized the development of up to four pilot programs that would allow the community and technical colleges to award bachelor's degrees in applied fields. In September 2005, the HECB approved revised program and facility approval policies and procedures that include procedures for the approval of applied baccalaureate programs at the community and technical colleges.

The HECB is working closely with the SBCTC on this project. SBCTC has established a timeline and criteria for the selection of the four pilot schools, and the first step in that process is underway. Six colleges submitted a "Notice of Intent" to submit a proposal to establish an applied baccalaureate program. In January, the SBCTC received applications and, during their April meeting, they will select four of the six colleges to submit proposals to the HECB for the establishment of the degree programs. Approved programs would enter a development phase in fall 2006 that would include review by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, curriculum development, and faculty hiring. The program would enroll students in fall 2007. Each approved program would enroll 20 FTE students in the first year, and 40 FTE students in the second year. Implementation of these programs is dependent on funding. The funding request is included in the governor's proposed supplemental budget package.

CTC/University Contracts

The Legislature authorized the development of up to three pilot programs that would allow the community and technical colleges to contract with the regional colleges, university branch campuses, and/or The Evergreen State College to offer baccalaureate degree programs on the community college campus. In September 2005, the HECB approved revised program and facility approval policies and procedures that include procedures for the approval of contracts.

The HECB is working closely with the SBCTC on this project. The SBCTC has established a timeline and criteria for the selection of the three pilot schools. Schools applying for the university contracts will submit a "Notice of Intent" in January 2006. SBCTC will receive full applications in March, and will select the three pilot schools during their April meeting. The selected schools will then submit the agreements to the HECB for approval, and the partner

institutions will submit appropriate documentation for approval of the degree program that is to be delivered at the site. The programs would enroll students in fall 2006. Each approved program would enroll approximately 40 FTE students in the first year, and 80 FTE students in the second year. Implementation of these programs is dependent on funding. The funding request is included in the governor's proposed supplemental budget package

NSIS Transition

Everett Community College has completed a draft report on its plans to develop the NSIS consortium using the university center model. The plan calls for relocating the consortium to Everett Community College by 2009 by adding additional space to an already planned building. The administrative operating costs would carry forward. In addition, the plan calls for enrollment funding at the regional university level for approximately 250 FTE students in 2006-07, and would grow to between 700 and 1,500 FTE in nine baccalaureate and four graduate programs by 2015.

The plan also includes a capital request of approximately \$14 million for the additional space needed to accommodate approximately 600 FTE students. In addition, the plan calls for distributed delivery options throughout the Snohomish/Island/Skagit County region; a portion of which would be housed at Skagit Valley College. Approximately \$3 million in capital funding would be required at Skagit Valley College.

Recommended Measures

The report required of the HECB in 2008 asks for data on the increased capacity at the upper-division level, as well as the number of degrees awarded. However, the timeline for the new degree program implementation will not allow enough time to compile reliable degree data.

For example, the applied baccalaureate programs at the community and technical colleges would not begin until fall 2007 and, for most of the proposed programs, the first full class of graduates would not complete their coursework until spring 2009. At the time of this report, we can expect that freshman enrollments at the branch campuses would be entering their junior year, applied baccalaureate students would be entering their senior year, and full-time programs offered through CTC/University contracts would graduate the first cohort of students. In addition, we can expect enrollment and programmatic growth at the NSIS consortium and finalized plans for the transition from the Everett Station site to the Everett Community College campus.

The following benchmarks and measures are proposed to provide the HECB and Legislature with the December 2008 update on progress in implementing the goals articulated in HB 1794. In addition to reporting on the benchmarks provided in the measures below, the HECB will also look at the impact of these changes on the institutions, including an examination of changes in institutional role and mission and changes external to any single institution, such as the impact on regional college participation rates and degree production.

Expansion of the Branch Campuses

- Establishment of proportionality agreements prior to the first freshman class
- Development of degree pathways, early-transfer pathways, and co-admission and co-enrollment agreements
- Approval of new degree program(s) (if required)
- Freshman application data
 - Applications received, offers extended, acceptance by students, fall matriculation (fall 2006, fall 2007, fall 2008)
- Transfer data
 - Lower-division transfers (annual transfers 2006-07, 2007-08)
- Lower-division FTE enrollments
 - Annual average FTE (2006-07, 2007-08)
- Freshman diversity/lower-division diversity
 - Freshman Pell percentage compared to institution
 - Race ethnicity compared to institution
 - Age compared to institution
 - Gender compared to institution
- Freshman persistence
 - Freshman to sophomore persistence (fall 2006 to fall 2007 and fall 2007 to fall 2008)
 - Freshman to junior persistence (fall 2006 to fall 2008)
- Governing board approval of changes to institutional role and mission (if required)

Community and Technical College Applied Baccalaureate Programs

- New degree program approval
 - HECB degree approval
 - Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Accreditation review and candidacy status
- Program course development
 - Number of courses
 - Type of courses (general education/major specific)
- Completion of faculty hires (if required)

- Baccalaureate application data
 - Applications received, offers extended, acceptance by students, fall matriculation (fall 2007, fall 2008)
- Major program/upper-division enrollments
- Upper-division persistence
 - Fall 2007 to fall 2008 persistence
- Baccalaureate degrees awarded by summer 2008 (if applicable)
- Upper-division diversity
 - Upper-division Pell percentage compared to institution
 - Race/ethnicity compared to institution
 - Age compared to institution
 - Gender compared to institution
- Governing board approval of changes to institutional role and mission

CTC/University Contracts (to be submitted jointly by CTC and Degree Granting Partner Institution)

- Contract approval
- Program approval (if required)
- Baccalaureate application data
 - Applications received, offers extended, acceptance by students, fall matriculation (fall 2006, fall 2007, fall 2008)
- Major program/upper-division enrollments
- Upper-division persistence
 - Fall 2006 to fall 2007 and fall 2007 to fall 2008 persistence
 - Fall 2006 to fall 2008 persistence
- Baccalaureate degrees awarded by summer 2008
- Upper-division diversity
 - Upper-division Pell percentage compared to institution Pell percentage
 - Race/ethnicity compared to institution
 - Age compared to institution
 - Gender compared to institution
- Governing board approval of changes to institutional role and mission

NSIS

- Completion of educational plan
- Growth in enrollment (310-340 FTE students in fall 2008 consistent with plan)
- Growth in degree program offerings (consistent with plan)
- Growth in the number of degree completions
- Timeline/status of consortium move (preliminarily due December 2005)

RESOLUTION NO. 06-06

WHEREAS, The 2005 Legislature authorized expanded access to baccalaureate degree programs through the passage of House Bill 1794; and

WHEREAS, State law (RCW 28.76.230) directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board to report on progress in implementing the new authorities granted in the measure by December 2008; and

WHEREAS, The three branch campuses that received full authority to admit freshman students – WSU Vancouver, UW Tacoma, and UW Bothell – have made progress in admission of a freshman class for 2006; and

WHEREAS, The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has worked closely with the Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish a process and criteria for the selection of pilot institutions to award Applied Baccalaureate Degrees and University Contracts; and

WHEREAS, Everett Community College has completed a draft plan for transition of the NSIS consortium to Everett Community College, using the “university center” model; and

WHEREAS, The Higher Education Coordinating Board has reviewed the proposed measures to assess progress in implementing strategies to expand access to baccalaureate degree programs, as authorized in House Bill 1794;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board adopts the measures outlined in the *Status Report on Implementation of House Bill 1794*.

Adopted:

February 23, 2006

Attest:

Gene J. Colin, Chair

Jesus Hernandez, Secretary